

bills, the charter school and vocational education bills that will soon become law. I take real exception to this kind of blatant political gamesmanship and partisan hypocrisy.

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) made these comments on the very day that he voted for the charter school bill which passed the House of Representatives by a vote of 369 to 50. The President made his comments the very next day, with the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GEPHARDT) seated directly at his side at the conclusion of a White House meeting on the budget negotiations. So which is it?

This is blatant hypocrisy. What we are really fighting here is a losing philosophical battle, because we Republicans believe that in fighting for our children's future and in trying to improve the quality of American education, we can only get there by emphasizing local control and decision-making, by putting greater emphasis on more parental involvement and choice in education, shifting the education paradigm from the providers of education to the consumers of education, raising teacher competency and strengthening accountability. And we can only do that by infusing competition and choice into the education system. It is called the market system, market principles. That is how we will get the reforms and the results that everybody wants in this country, certainly every parent, better pupil performance and higher student achievement.

So what you have been hearing in the House of Representatives over the last few days is a partisan debate on how we should proceed. And I quote, in conclusion, an editorial from a newspaper in the district of the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. GOODLING) that he gave me just before leaving:

"The argument behind the Democratic approach is that local officials don't have the talent, character or motivation to use the money wisely. Only the Solomons in Washington have the necessary attributes."

Mr. Speaker, our record beats their rhetoric, and that is why we are a growing majority in the Congress and in the country.

A HISTORY LESSON WORTH REMEMBERING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANSEN). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle need to brush up on their history lessons. When they talk about block granting the President's teachers initiative to put 100,000 more teachers in the classroom, they should start by reviewing the history of the cops on the beat program.

In 1995, House Republicans voted to eliminate the cops on the beat program

and replace it with a block grant. But we prevailed; the program remains intact. And despite all the predictions of an out-of-control bureaucracy, the cops program has been one of the most successful and popular Federal programs in our history.

This program is making a real difference to people across this country. It is making a real difference to the people in my district in Northern California, the district just north of the Golden Gate bridge. The cops program is helping my district to be a safer place to live, a safer place to raise our children. This same program is making other districts, all of the districts across the country that much safer for families.

Since the cops program began, local police departments in my district, which includes Marin and Sonoma Counties, have received a total of more than \$4.4 million in Federal funding, including nearly \$2 million in funds for public safety departments, to hire the equivalent of 38 new police officers. Cops funding has been used for a variety of public safety programs, including establishing domestic violence reduction programs.

Guess what? There is no out-of-control bureaucracy. There are no hoops to jump through, no red tape. Police departments have had the flexibility to put officers and other resources where they need them the most. The Clinton initiative for schools to hire 100,000 new teachers would be much the same. Yet despite the overwhelming success of the targeted cops program, House Republicans want to do the same thing that they proposed for that program to the President's teachers initiative, that they tried to do before. They want to use a block grant rather than target funds to hire the new teachers. Will they never learn?

We already know that overcrowded classrooms is one of the biggest obstacles to improving education for our children, and we know that a block grant cannot guarantee our kids smaller classes unless we guarantee more trained teachers.

Democrats want to target funds to schools to hire more teachers using the title I formula.

They want to use the title VI formula. They will not use the title I formula, when title I is the most successful education funding formula and it will guarantee that our Federal dollars are used to hire teachers and, in turn, reduce class size.

Democrats also want to help schools reduce class size by financing school bond initiatives. Too many American students are trying to learn in crumbling, unsafe school buildings or in temporary trailers which have turned into permanent trailers in school parking lots.

Democrats also want many of our students that are already missing out on technology and being part of the technology superhighway to help their schools get wired.

This Congress should be helping communities repair their unsafe schools. They should be helping communities renovate their school buildings and they should be helping their communities make sure that these temporary-turned-into-permanent trailers are not a real ongoing part of their school.

Mr. Speaker, children make up 25 percent of our population, but they are 100 percent of our future. Investing in their education is the best way to invest in their future and, therefore, the best way to invest in the future of the United States of America.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. ROUKEMA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. ROUKEMA. addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN SUPPORT OF H.R. 4567

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to once again urge passage of legislation that this body passed several days ago, in fact last Saturday we passed H.R. 4567, which provides funding for home health care agencies hardest hit by changes made in last year's Medicare bill. Unfortunately the Senate has yet to address this legislation, and it is an awfully critical issue for the senior citizens as well as home health care providers in the State of Kansas and across the country.

While I recognize the need to curb Medicare costs, we need to direct changes at fraud, waste and abuse. The changes that we made last year in many cases were simply across-the-board cuts in funding, and unfortunately this has had a dramatic impact on some of the most cost-effective providers in our communities across the country.

H.R. 4567 would provide relief for our senior citizens in need of home health care. These issues are critical to many senior citizens.

Many senior citizens have attempted to keep their loved ones in home. Many people have tried to stay in their home, and they are only able to do so because of the benefits of home health care.

In my home State of Kansas, a number of those agencies that provide home health care services have already closed their doors. And for the people that they provide services to in rural areas and small communities, the loss of their home health care agency often means a loss of this service, resulting in increased cost and a lessening of the quality of life.

Home health services provide senior citizens with the opportunity to remain in their own homes with their own families, and ultimately they save

Medicare program costs, which exist because of the alternative being hospital care or long-term care.

While this legislation is not a perfect solution, it does represent a step in the right direction. Congress knew that this payment system was flawed in the home health care area and assured our senior citizens that there would be a short-term fix. We now know that this new "short-term fix" will last a long time, causing continual problems for home health care agencies and the people that they serve.

This new payment system that we are told is waiting in the wings is now not going to be ready until next year and perhaps not even until the following year.

We simply cannot afford to close this session of Congress without the Senate addressing the bill that the House has already passed, without incurring dire consequences to the citizens of this country.

The Medicare home health care patients in this country and in Kansas desperately need reforms. I urge the Senate to join the House in passing this bipartisan legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McNULTY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A WORLD SERIES CHALLENGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the 17th congressional district in New York covers a large part of Bronx County. We affectionately call Bronx "the Bronx," it is one of the only places in the country where we put the "the" in front of it. I am Bronx born and bred. The Bronx is not only famous for the Bronx Zoo and for the Bronx cheer, but it is also famous for the Bronx Bombers, notably the New York Yankees.

And last night at the close of the last vote, I flew back to New York to be at Yankee stadium and watch the New York Yankees win the American League pennant and now the World Series will begin Saturday night at Yankee stadium.

I was raised just a few blocks from Yankee stadium. When I was boy I used to walk to Yankee games. Now I look forward, Saturday night, to seeing the Yankees march on to win the World Series.

This year, Mr. Speaker, the Yankees set an American League record, winning a record 114 games. And, of course, this week's Baseball Weekly has a picture of Bernie Williams on the front page, and it says, Bronx Battlers, and so we are very, very proud of that in the Bronx.

I take to the well today to issue a challenge to my colleagues from both San Diego and Atlanta. We do not quite know who is going to win the National League pennant, but it will be decided in a day or two. I would like to issue a challenge to them. I would like to bet them on the eventual winner of the World Series for 1998. I have no doubt that it will be the New York Yankees.

And let me say that I would be more than willing, when the Yankees win, to take them on a tour of the Bronx. The Bronx has come back after many years and we are very, very proud of the 1.3 million people living in the Bronx and very, very proud of what the Bronx Bombers, the New York Yankees, have accomplished.

So since we probably will be out of session by Thursday or Friday and we might not know who the Yankees will face, I want to issue a challenge again to my colleagues from both Atlanta and San Diego. I would be very happy to take a tour of their district, if their team wins, but of course their team will not. So I want to invite them to take a tour of the Bronx after the New York Yankees win the World Series.

□ 1630

LEAVE THE RUNNING OF SCHOOLS TO THE SCHOOL BOARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I am a former teacher from Everett, Washington. Over the 30 years I have taught in Everett, there are now thousands of former students in Washington State and scattered across the Nation. I know how crucial the education improvements in this budget are.

We must now make education one of our top priorities. Yet, we are all well aware that Washington, D.C. cannot run our schools. It would be a disaster for us to try. Our mission is to support education but leave maximum power and authority at the State and local levels.

Our school systems worked so well when the parents and the local school boards had full responsibility for local schools. However, the financing of education has not kept pace, so our best course now is to provide all the money possible and leave the actual running of the schools in the hands of the local school board and of the teachers, remembering, however, that the parents must retain ultimate control of schools or the system will fail the students.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MINGE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FOX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE TRUTH NEEDS TO BE TOLD ABOUT HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to weigh in with the previous speaker. I did also teach for 16 years in Illinois, and I see the rhetoric and have heard the rhetoric that has been flying across the room these last couple of days, and it amazes me too a great deal. When I think about education, I think about putting good teachers in the classrooms. All the other folderol and bells and whistles, sometimes it helps but it does not make the difference whether kids are learning or not.

I think the effort that we have put into this bill, that we anticipate to have moving forward, to put the responsibility back home with local school boards and with moms and dads and teachers and school board members so that they can do the best job and decide who the teachers are that should be in their classroom, instead of having somebody in Washington, D.C., in the Department of Education, deciding which school district should do which and how many people they should have in every classroom, let us keep that decision back home.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss another issue, and I think it is an issue of great importance to the people of this country, and that is HMO reform, or managed care reform. Over the last days also I have heard great partisan rhetoric on this floor about this issue, and I rise today, Mr. Speaker, with some of my colleagues who are also concerned about the truth, to set the record straight.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that this is a political time of year. People are running for election. They are looking for political issues, and I know that we will listen to all kinds of exaggerations and partisan debate on this floor but there is no excuse, Mr. Speaker, for the kind of nasty and misleading information I have heard over the last few days. The truth needs to be told.

For six months, 15 of my colleagues and I sat down around a table and considered the problem of HMO reform.